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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/634,007	08/04/2003	Ronald Goenner	057517/0040	5046

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EXAMINER

HANNON, THOMAS R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3682

DATE MAILED: 08/18/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/634,007

Applicant(s)

GOENNER, RONALD

Examiner

Thomas R. Hannon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 July 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: The term "lapping" throughout the specification should be changed to --lapping--.

Appropriate correction is required.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. There is no support in the original description for claiming the "plurality of pressure generating grooves are formed by powder injection molding process".

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakazeki et al. in view of Takahashi et al.

First, it must be noted that the patentability of the product claims is determined by the structural limitations of the product and not the recited process steps. Nakazeki discloses a spindle motor with a hydrodynamic bearing system having a one-piece thrust-plate/shaft component (2), comprising a shaft portion (2a) and a thrust plate portion (2b). The Nakazeki et

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al. patent is silent as to the specific manner of forming the shaft member. Takahashi et al.

Discloses a dynamic pressure bearing assembly made of a porous material. Alternatively, the shaft member (Figure 3) can be made of the porous material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the shaft assembly of Nakazeki to be formed of a porous material (metal powder), as taught and suggested by Takahashi et al.

With respect to claims 5 and 12, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Nakazeki such that the thrust plate is in the mid section of the shaft portion, because spindle motors having such a bearing arrangement are known in the art. With respect to claims 7 and 14, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Nakazeki such that the thrust-plate/shaft component is a fixed element, because spindle motors having fixed shaft arrangements are old and well known in the art.

Applicant's arguments filed July 11, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant states that support for the amendment can be found in paragraphs [0022] and [0024]. With respect to the forming of the grooves, these paragraphs merely state "A plurality of radial pressure generating grooves 23 is provided on the outer surface of shaft portion 12". There is no indication that this occurs during the powder injection molding process. There is no support anywhere in the original specification to lead one to believe that the grooves are provided in the shaft during the injection molding process. Nowhere in the description of the molding process is found a discussion of forming the grooves.

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Applicant further argues “the addition of this element makes the present invention patentable over the prior [art] because the prior art does not show pressure generating grooves being formed during the injection molding process.” However, as note in the previous rejection, and repeated above, the patentability of a product claim is not defined by process steps, but by the structural limitations of the product. The above note combination renders obvious all the structural limitations of the present claims. Each of the references clearly indicate the presence of radial pressure generating groove son an outer surface of the shaft.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas R. Hannon whose telephone number is (571) 272-7104. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (8:30-7:00).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bucci can be reached on (571) 272-7099. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Thomas R. Hannon
Primary Examiner
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trh